

Lord of the Flies

Fascinating Island

Many books, television shows, and movies take life on a desert island as their central plot. Why? What makes marooned characters so fascinating?

Write a paragraph about a few books, shows, or movies that feature marooned characters struggling against the landscape or against one another. What do these characters have in common? Why is life on a desert island such an oft-employed plot?

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Casting the Castaways

You, a high-powered movie mogul, have just purchased the rights to William Golding's novel. Which actors will you choose to play the parts of Ralph, Piggy, Jack, Simon, Roger, Sam, and Eric? Why might you favor one actor over another for a particular role?



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This Equals That

Lord of the Flies is an allegory—that is, the characters and objects in the novel stand for significant ideas, themes, and abstractions.

Make a list of the characters and objects that you believe represent ideas, themes, or abstractions. Indicate what you think each character or object you list might stand for.

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The Good, the Bad, the Island

In his novel, William Golding creates a world in which evil dominates human nature. In the end, the evil in the boys overpowers the good.

Write a paragraph about what you think: do you believe that the island world created by Golding is a microcosm of our larger society? Are people inherently evil? If left unchecked, will evil always rule?



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The Suffering of Swine

Piggy, perhaps the smartest of the boys, suffers the most abuse. The other boys pick on him, harass him, or simply ignore him. Why? How does Piggy fit in with the rest of the story? Write a paragraph about what the character of Piggy might stand for or represent.

Special Simon

William Golding depicts Simon as being much different from the rest of the boys on the island. Write a paragraph about what makes Simon unique. Do you know any real-life Simons? What makes them so special?



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The Sixty-Year-Old Beast

At two separate moments in the novel, Simon explains that the beast is within us. Some critics attribute William Golding's vision of evil to his experiences in World War II. If Golding were writing today, do you think he would have the same view of humanity? Have humans become more evil since World War II, or have the last sixty or so years made us better people? Write a paragraph or two in which you discuss your views.



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Jack's Inner Drive

His mind was crowded with memories; memories of the knowledge that had come to them when they closed in on the struggling pig, knowledge that they had outwitted a living thing, imposed their will upon it, taken away its life like a long satisfying drink. (Chapter 4)

After Jack kills his first pig, he is overwhelmed by excitement and joy.

Write a paragraph about what Jack's state of mind at this moment, as revealed by this passage, suggests about his character and inner motivations.



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The End of Innocence

The narrator explains Ralph's reaction upon the realization that he is no longer a child:

Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of a true, wise friend called Piggy. (Chapter 12)

Write a paragraph about a time when you realized that you were no longer an innocent child. Was this a moment of despair for you, as it was for Ralph, or was it a moment of joy? Explain.